

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in the present application.

The Examiner has required election in the present application between:

Group I, claims 1-4, drawn to a chemical resistant porous film; and

Group II, claims 5-6, drawn to a method for producing a chemical resistant porous film.

For the purpose of examination of the present application, Applicants elect, with traverse, Group I, Claims 1-4.

Applicants submit that the present restriction requirement is improper, as Groups I and II relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, claims 1 and 2 are neither anticipated nor obvious over Ooms (U.S. 4,927,695) (hereinafter Ooms '695).

Ooms '695 discloses "an ink-impregnated microporous marking structure as part of a hand stamp" (see column 3, lines 10-12). Further, Ooms '695 discloses that "[a]s shown in FIG. 2, marking structure 22 is a block structure having three successive layers including an outer, ink-impregnated, microporous layer 24, an absorbent backing layer 26 and a sealant layer 27" (see column 3, lines 40-44).

Thus, while Ooms '695 discloses that "a material having an average pore size of less than about 100 microns in diameter and greater than about 0.5 microns in diameter functions well in this invention" (see column 3, lines 22-23), the material referred to is not a "communicating micropore", as presently claimed, but rather the ink-impregnated, microporous layer 24.

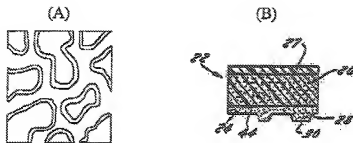
Furthermore, the Examiner's attention is directed to column 3, lines 31-35 of Ooms '695, where it is explicitly disclosed that "such pores are oftentimes otherwise quite irregular and

varied in shape and size, and for this reason it may be difficult to determine the "diameter" of any given pore or the "average diameter" of pores of a particular material."

In addition, Ooms '695 does not teach or suggest that the ink-impregnated, microporous layer 24 is covered with a chemical resistant polymeric compound. In contrast, the present invention is directed to a porous film comprising a porous film base and a chemical-resistant polymeric compound covering the porous film base.

Additionally, Applicants submit that Ooms '695 does not teach the average pore size of micropores of the urethane foams, as Ooms '695 discloses that "materials suitable for forming the backing layer 26 include wool (woven or felted), cotton (woven or felted), urethane foam, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) foam, jute, hemp, cork, non-woven cellulose (including paper and cardboard), and fabrics of treated synthetic fibers (woven or non-woven) such as polyethylene, polypropylene, nylon, rayon, polyester, teflon and fiberglass. Suitable urethane foams must be of the open cell type with interconnected pores to allow for fluid transfer" (see column 4, line 64 - column 5, line 4).

Applicants respectfully submit that the structure of the porous film base covered with the chemical-resistant polymeric compound of the present invention (Figure A below) is remarkably different from the structure of a film covered by the materials disclosed by Ooms '695 (Figure B below).



Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1 and 2 are neither anticipated nor obvious over Ooms '695, and Groups I and II relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this requirement are thus respectfully requested.

Conclusion

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.


Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Marc S. Weiner, Registration No. 32,181 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By


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